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ABSTRACT

The Counselor Rating Form (CRF) was developed as an instrument intended to measure clients' perception of counselor behavior on the dimensions of expertness, attractiveness and trustworthiness. The CRF was based on Strong's model of counseling as an interpersonal influence process and constructed to contain 36 bipolar adjectives, each 12 designed to measure a different entity. The reliability of the scales was found to be approximately .80. The validity of this instrument was also examined by several studies. Additionally, the CRF was translated and adapted to fit the Israeli culture and language with further studies constructed to establish reliability and validity. (Author)

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE
COUNSELOR RATING FORM AND ITS
CROSS-CULTURAL ADAPTATION

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The Counselor Rating Form (CRF) was originally developed by Barak and LaCrosse (1975) in purpose to test Strong's (1968) underlying assumption regarding the existence of separate perceived dimensions of expertness, (social) attractiveness, and trustworthiness. In his theoretical model of counseling interaction as representing an interpersonal influence process, Strong hypothesized that counselors who are perceived by clients as expert, attractive, and trustworthy, should be more influential with clients that counselors not perceived as such. In the base of the model, there was an assumption that the above perceived dimensions are evaluated independently.

The CRF was constructed in order to test this assumption, but through the progress of the research series, the purpose of the CRF have been extended to:

- (a) Reliably assess the perceived expertness, attractiveness, and trustworthiness of an observed counselor and thus serve as a dependent variable measure in counseling process research.
- (b) Serve as a training device, by providing a vehicle for standard feedback to a supervised counselor.
- (c) Be used as a tool which enables comparing perceptions of a single counselor from multiple sources, such as observers, clients, and the counselor him/herself.

Development of the CRF

Items Selection. Eighty-three adjectives, each of them describing counselor functioning on the dimensions of expertness, attractiveness, and trustworthiness, were generated from articles published and research conducted by Dell (1973); Kaul & Schmidt (1971); Schmidt & Strong (1970, 1971); Strong (1968, 1970, 1971); Strong & Dixon (1971); Strong & Matross (1973); Strong & Schmidt (1970a, 1970b); and Strong, Taylor, Bratton & Lapper (1971). The adjectives

list was presented to four expert judges¹ who were asked to classify the items to one of the three dimensions of expertness, attractiveness, and trustworthiness, according to a given definition of each dimension. Using 75% agreement as a lower limit for item selection, 36 items were selected to construct the CRF, each dimension represented by 12 items. For each adjective an antonym was selected (e.g., analytic-diffuse, friendly-unfriendly, confidential-revealing) to form a bipolar adjective pair with a 7-point bipolar scale. The items were randomly distributed throughout the list, and the same was done for the item-pair poles. Instructions and examples were attached to the list on a separate page.

The first research used the CRF was a factor analytic study (Barak & LaCrosse, 1975) and following its results two items were replaced² and thus the Revised CRF was completed.

Scoring.

The scale (=dimension) score is the sum of the 12 items belonging to each scale. Since the possible rating range for an item is between 1 and 7, the score range of each scale is from a minimum of 12 to a maximum of 84. Previous studies used the CRF have shown mean scores range from 52 to 78 (Barak & Dell, 1977; Barak & Cash, Kehr & Salzbach, 1978; Cash & Salzbach, 1978; Claiborn & Schmidt, 1977; Heppner & Dixon, 1978; Kerr & Dell, 1976; Kleinke & Tully, 1979; LaCrosse, 1977; LaCrosse & Barak, 1976; Merluzzi, Banikiotes & Missbach, 1978). The standard deviations were between 6 and 20. The means are somewhat higher than the expectancy (or the middle score of the scale) and this may be explained by the initial credit given to an observed counselor.

Reliability.

Split-half reliability coefficients for the three scales were assessed by LaCrosse & Barak (1976), using three observed rating stimuli, i.e.,

interviews given by Carl Rogers, Albert Ellis, and Fritz Perls, in three different groups. Table 1 presents the findings. As may be observed, the

Insert Table 1 about here

reliabilities ranged between .75 to .93, with mean reliabilities of .87, .85, and .91, for expertness, attractiveness, and trustworthiness, respectively.

In a different kind of reliability assessment, various raters showed considerable agreement in rating counselor's functioning. This indicates that the scales have stood the criterion of interater reliability (Barak & LaCrosse, 1977; LaCrosse, 1977).

Validity.

Since the CRF is relatively a new measurement instrument, there are not enough data to ensure its validity, especially predictive validity, i.e., the relationship between counselor's perceptions and client post-counseling behavior. Nevertheless, there are some data which reinforce the assumption that the CRF is a valid instrument.

(a) The intercorrelations among the three scales, which refer to the CRF convergent-divergent validity, are usually in the .60's (e.g., LaCrosse & Barak, 1976). This finding means that there is considerable amount of overlap among the scales (as should be, because of a common persuasive personality), and each dimension appears to have enough uniqueness to be considered a separate entity.

(b) Some evidence of concurrent validity can be inferred from the results of studies which sought to find differences among counselors. These

differences were consistent with possessed counselors' behaviors. For instance, Merluzzi et al. (1978) reported that counselors who were described as more experienced than other counselors were rated higher on expertness (mean score of 62.47 vs. 54.58, respectively; $F=9.63$; $p<.01$), but had not been perceived differently on the other two scales according to this independent variable. Counselors who were described as self-disclosures, were evaluated higher on attractiveness (65.28 vs. 60.32; $F=6.14$; $p<.04$) than counselors who were described as showing low self-disclosure behavior.

(c) Other evidence of concurrent validity may be gathered by the intracounselors differences in ratings, i.e., differences among the same counselor perceived dimensions. For instance, LaCross & Barak (1976) found that Ellis, who possessed much of self-confident, informed and rational behaviour, was perceived by the subjects as more expert than either attractive or trustworthy ($p<.01$). Rogers, who symbolises openness, warmth, and genuiness, was perceived as more trustworthy and attractive than expert ($p<.01$).

(d) Another information about the CRF validity was found by Barak & Dell (1977). They found that the perceived counselor dimensions are highly related to the likelihood of subjects self-referral in various problem areas. As may be observed in Table 2, perceived counselor behavior in each dimension

Insert Table 2 about here

is highly correlated with the subjects' willingness to be counseled by the observed counselor. That is, the CRF scales were able to determine the perceived quality of the counselor.

Hebrew Adaptation of the CRF

The CRF was translated to Hebrew, with some changes necessitated because of cultural and/or lingual differences between the U.S. and Israel. The Hebrew form format was identical to the English one.

The form was administered to subjects in several samples: 50 clients who completed the CRF after the first counseling session, 120 subjects who observed six different counselors via videotape, and 60 subjects who listened to audiotaped segments of counseling interviews. The different subject populations and stimuli for rating made a good item-analysis possible. The item-analysis, which was done by correlating the response on each item with the total score of each scale, revealed that most of the items were valid, that is, they highly correlated with the total score of their own scale and lowly correlated with the total scores of the other two scales. Table 3 presents some examples of "good" and "bad" items.

Insert Table 3 about here

According to the item-analysis results, some items were altered and/or replaced. The new version was administered to another sample of 104 subjects who watched videotaped segments of counseling interviews done by eight different counselors who role-played in various professional functioning levels.

The item-analysis results revealed that all the items correlated higher with their own scale than with the other two scales. Table 4 presents some examples of items from the final version.

Insert Table 4 about here

The mean item scores were between 3.60 and 5.90, with standard deviations around 1.5. These data mean that the items were differentiating well enough. The total scale scores had means of 60.8, 52.1, and 63.4 for expertness, attractiveness, and trustworthiness, respectively, with standard deviations around 14, and ranged from 13 to 84. The Kuder-Richardson reliability coefficients were .83, .88, and .87 for expertness, attractiveness, and trustworthiness respectively.

The psychometric characteristics presented above supported the CRF as a measurement device. Several studies were conducted, using the Hebrew version of the CRF, and supported its validity:

(a) Counselors who demonstrated more self-confidence and authority were perceived as more expert but less attractive.

(b) Formal and professional attire and room-setting influenced counselors perception on expertness and attractiveness dimensions.

(c) Discrepancies between expectations and actual counselor functioning reduced counselor's evaluations on all three dimensions.

(d) Manner is more important than content in formation of client perceptions.

(e) Nonverbal behavior enhance attributed attractiveness.

The above results, in part, are replications of American studies and yielded similar and rational results. They support, therefore, the construct validity of the CRF.

Several studies are taken place in the present, most of them deal with the external validity of the CRF, that is, its ability to predict some outcome variables, such as dropout from counseling and counseling effectiveness.

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Table 1

Split Half Reliability Coefficients of the CRF

		Rating Stimulus			All
		Ellis (n=40)	Rogers (n=43)	Perls (n=44)	
Scale	Expertness	.85	.83	.92	.87
	Attractiveness	.75	.89	.88	.85
	Trustworthiness	.89	.93	.91	.91

Table 2

Correlations between Perceived Counselor Behavior and Willingness to Consult Counselor by Specific Problem

Problem	E	A	T
Academic	.58	.58	.52
Vocational	.47	.60	.47
Speech Anxiety	.38	.46	.36
Dating	.37	.40	.28
Test Anxiety	.46	.44	.40
Sexual	.31	.42	.29
Depression	.51	.47	.50
"Loosing my mind"	.51	.43	.51

Note: The correlations reported are mean correlations of the original data. All correlations are significant at least below the .05 level. N's were 68-73.
E = Expertness. A = Attractiveness. T = Trustworthiness.

Table 3

Examples of "Good" and "Bad" items in the CRF First Hebrew Version

		Correlation with			
	<u>Item</u>	<u>Scale</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>T</u>
"good" items	professional-nonprofessional	E	<u>81</u>	33	61
	likeable-unlikeable	A	45	<u>83</u>	53
	sincere-insincere	T	44	35	<u>58</u>
"bad" items	concentrated-unconcentrated	E	<u>65</u>	53	69
	interested-uninterested	A	60	<u>51</u>	65
	dependable-undependable	T	62	44	<u>60</u>

Note: E = Expertness; A = Attractiveness; T = Trustworthiness.

Decimals omitted.

Table 4

Examples of Items in the CRF Final Hebrew Version

<u>Item</u>	<u>Scale</u>	Correlation with		
		<u>E</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>T</u>
informed-ignorant	E	<u>65</u>	31	50
professional-nonprofessional	E	<u>81</u>	33	58
open-closed	A	43	<u>75</u>	48
likeable-unlikeable	A	40	<u>82</u>	51
honest-dishonest	T	43	25	<u>57</u>
reliable-unreliable	T	60	40	<u>71</u>

Note: E = Expertness; A = Attractiveness; T = Trustworthiness.

Decimals omitted.

FOOTNOTES

¹Don M. Dell, Ted. J. Kaul, Lyle D. Schmidt, and W. Bruce Walsh.

²The original items of "confidential-revealing" and "unbiased-biased" were replaced by "believable-suspicious" and "genuine-phoney", respectively.